CLAIMS:

1. A method of producing batches of micro particles, comprising:-

a) affixing a substrate sheet to a support

b) cutting the substrate sheet by means of a laser device to define a plurality of micro particles;

c) either before, after or during the cutting of the substrate sheet, marking the region of the substrate sheet defining each micro particle by means of a laser device with a code or other identifying marking, said code or other identifying marking being unique to that particular batch of micro particles to uniquely identify that batch; and

d) removing the micro particles from the support.

2. A method according to claim 1, wherein a single laser device is used for cutting the substrate sheet and marking the micro particles.

3. A method according to claim 1, wherein separate laser devices are used for respectively cutting the substrate sheet and marking the micro particles.

4. A method as claimed in any preceding claim wherein said code or other identifying marking is discernible by means of a contrast or colour, reflectance or light transmission.

5. A method according to any preceding claim, wherein the substrate comprises a plastic material having a metal layer thereon, preferably formed by vacuum deposition, said code is formed by evaporation of the metal layer by means of the laser device to define a pattern or discernible code on each micro particle.

6. An method according to any of claims 1 to 4, wherein the substrate comprises a plastic material and said code is formed by burning holes in

said substrate to define a pattern or discernible code on each micro particle.

7. A method as claimed in either claim 5 or claim 6, wherein said pattern or discernible code comprises a series of digits.

8. A method according to any preceding claim, wherein the substrate sheet is affixed to the support by means of a suitable adhesive.

9. A method according to any preceding claim, wherein the support comprises a flat sheet of inert material.

10. A method according to claim 9, wherein the support is formed from glass or a suitable plastic.

11. A method according to any preceding claim, wherein the micro particles are removed from the support by the use of a suitable solvent.

12. A method according to any preceding claim, including the further step of suspending the micro particles in a suitable medium to allow the micro particles to be painted or sprayed onto goods to be marked.

13. A method according to claim 12, wherein the medium in which the micro particles are suspended contains an anti oxidant.

14. A method according to any preceding claim, wherein, during steps (b) and (c) of claim 1, said support, and substrate sheet affixed thereto, is mounted beneath one or more fixed laser devices such that the support is movable in a plane perpendicular to the axis of the one or more laser devices.

15.A method according to claim 14, wherein the movement of the support with respect to the one or more laser devices is controlled by means of a computer.